

Presentation

Agenda Item #	3
Meeting Date	October 4, 2004
Prepared By	Suzanne Ludlow, Community and Government Liaison
Approved By	Barbara B. Matthews City Manager

Discussion Item	Proposed Hospital Text Amendment
Background	<p>The Montgomery County Planning Board has asked its staff to draft a text amendment to address concerns Montgomery County hospital representatives and others have concerning the approval process for hospital expansions or facility changes in single-family residential zones. Currently, hospitals must obtain a special exception approval each time they wish to modify their facilities. A special exception process requires the hospital to prove the validity of the hospital use each time a modification is requested.</p> <p>While the special exception process is cumbersome for the hospitals, it can be more frustrating for the surrounding community members, who are often confused by the process and do not know how to have their concerns addressed. Many people believe the process should be changed, but are fearful that community members may have even less say in a new process. There is also suspicion about why there is a proposal to change the process at this time. Some community members wonder if a text amendment now would be a way to allow the Washington Adventist Hospital to move more quickly and with less public participation regarding their proposal to expand.</p> <p>Park and Planning staff made a brief presentation to the Planning Board on July 22, 2004, but, due to a tight agenda, little direction was given. Planning staff return to discuss the item, and hear public comments, on Thursday, October 7. A staff report for the October 7 discussion is to be made public on Friday, October 1. The staff report for the previous discussion is attached.</p> <p>From conversations with Park and Planning staff, it seems that staff will be suggesting that hospitals go through a site plan review process through the Planning Board, rather than the special exception process through the Board of Appeals. Any proposed text amendment would have further discussion with the Planning Board and County Council, including a public hearing.</p>
Policy	The City Council is concerned with land use law affecting the City of Takoma Park.
Fiscal Impact	n/a
Attachments	July 22, 2004 Park and Planning staff report
Recommendation	Hear presentation by Park and Planning staff; give direction to staff
Special Consideration	Planning Board discussion scheduled for October 7, 2004.